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actually realized in nature. Therefore, since the planets also could have separated in the form of globular masses, there is no longer any logical reason for holding the theory of ring formation, except in the case of *Saturn's* rings and the asteroids, which appear to have been exceptional.

There are other nebulae worthy of study, particularly the spiral nebulae, but since their true figures remain uncertain, they have not been considered in this discussion. If adequate attention is given to double, multiple and spiral nebulae, future research will throw light upon problems which now remain obscure, and in the course of time we shall perhaps be able to reach a definite conclusion respecting the formation not only of our own system, but of systems generally. And when sufficient data have been collected to throw light upon the results of theory, cosmogony ought to rise from the plane of mere speculation to the rank of a real science. If we shall at present succeed in discovering the law of double-star formation, no inconsiderable advance will have been made in the right direction.

February 21, 1893.

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## TWO NEW PLANISPHERES.

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BY W. J. HUSSEY.

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Recently two new planispheres have been issued in this country, one by The Register Publishing Company, Ann Arbor, Mich., and the other by POOLE Bros., Chicago. The former was arranged by Prof. HARRINGTON, the latter by Mr. JULES A. COLAS. The prices are \$1.00 and \$3.00 respectively.

The first is much the smaller and less pretentious of the two. It consists of the usual parts, a substantial movable disc, having the constellations mapped upon it, mounted on a square block of heavy cardboard, nearly nine inches on a side. The constellations given include those having north polar distances of less than  $120^{\circ}$ , and the stars, those of the four brightest magnitudes. A few of the most conspicuous nebulae and clusters are also given. The disc may be readily set to show that part of the celestial sphere above the horizon at any hour of the night on any day of the year. A key to the positions of the planets is given on the back. This is good till 1901.

The second possesses several advantages, by reason of its larger size and clearer typography. It is admirably engraved. Its movable disc is  $19\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter, and is mounted on a cardboard  $19 \times 23$  inches. It includes the constellations, with stars of the five brightest magnitudes as far as  $50^\circ$  South Declination. In nearly all cases it gives the names or numbers of the stars. It also gives a large number of clusters and nebulae. Double and multiple stars are distinguished from others by a small dash printed near them.

The only circles on this planisphere are those indicating the positions of the ecliptic and celestial equator. A device is given by means of which approximate Right Ascensions may be obtained. A string representing the meridian is stretched across the disc from the top to the bottom of the planisphere. The Right Ascensions are printed around the circumference of the disc. A star whose Right Ascension is sought being brought under the string, will have its Right Ascension indicated at the circumference at the point under the string. No means is given for obtaining the declinations.

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## A CÉLESTIAL HANDBOOK.

BY W. J. HUSSEY.

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As a companion to his planisphere, Mr. COLAS has prepared a *Celestial Handbook* of  $110 + xiii$  pages. It is published by POOLE Brothers, Chicago. Price, \$2.00.

It begins with several pages of introductory matter of an elementary character on the magnitudes, distances and classification of the stars and on the precession of the equinoxes. Then ninety-one pages are devoted to the constellations having north polar distances less than  $140^\circ$ ; six pages to a variety of tables, including a list of the constellations, the names of the principal stars, the principal binary stars, the finest colored double stars, stars for which a parallax has been found, etc.; and, finally, excepting indices, five pages to shooting stars, comets and the planets.

The account of each constellation begins with a very short description. This is followed by a list of its lucid stars, including their magnitudes and approximate positions for 1880, and then by notes on the more interesting stars, nebulae and clusters.